

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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**GOV. EASLEY ANNOUNCES HUNDREDS OF REFURBISHED BICYCLES WILL GO TO
CHILDREN THIS CHRISTMAS**

Prison Inmates Repair Bikes to Give to Needy Children

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley announced today that nearly 700 boys and girls will be receiving freshly refurbished bicycles thanks to projects at two state prisons. Inmates at the North Carolina Department of Correction facilities volunteered their time to recycle the bikes as a way to give back to their communities.

“This project not only gives many children a brighter Christmas holiday, but it also plays an important role in the rehabilitation of inmates,” said Easley. “The inmates gain skills while providing hundreds of less fortunate children with a special gift.”

Inmates at Marion Correctional Center refurbished 407 bicycles while inmates at Gates Correctional Center repaired 288 bikes for distribution to North Carolina children this year. Some new bicycles with minor defects are donated by retail stores and used bicycles are donated by residents in communities near the correctional centers. The inmates repair broken parts and apply fresh coats of paint so the bikes look like new. Inmates get help from the McDowell Technical Community College Auto Body Shop and the Bicycle Ministry in Gates County in applying the paint.

Through local community partnerships, organizers ensure that the bicycles are given to children who most need them. Marion Correctional Center partners with “Wheels of Love,” operated by Keep McDowell Beautiful, the Marion Moose Family Center, Old Fort Ruritans and other civic organizations and government agencies. Gates Correctional Center partners with the Bicycle Ministry, which donates bikes to the Angel Tree Program, Toys for Tots, Gates County Public Schools, Gates County Social Services and area churches.

This is the fourth year for the program at Gates and the third year at Marion. Inmates volunteer their time when they are not working on their prison jobs or assigned to vocational or educational programs.

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